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ABSTRACT

Although many studies have shown women administrators to be as able in positions of leadership as men, women are found less and less in public school administration. Many reasons are given to account for this situation -- largely myths grounded in a value system operationalized through the economic institutions. Albeit, larger numbers of women than ever are present in the work force both because of the continuous influx of married women and a rise in the number of female heads of households. Women should be more aggressive in pursuing their rights to fill administrative positions for which their education and experience fit them. They should bring to those jobs the sensitivity necessary for effective human and personal relations and should design and implement governance models that give every role incumbent some input into decisionmaking. (Author/WM)

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SPEAKER: Barbara A. Sizemore, Associate Secretary, American Asso. of School Administrators
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In spite of the fact that many studies have shown that women administrators are as able in positions of leadership as men, women are found less and less in public school administration. According to one study approximately 96% of all high school principals are male, as are 78% of all elementary school principals. Only 9% of the women in institutions of higher education hold the rank of full professor, and it is estimated that only 3% of the AASA membership is female. Johnson's study does not waste time lamenting the situation. Rather she urges us to be prepared, become qualified, initiate legislation, develop commitment and to engage in legal action if necessary.

Many reasons are submitted for the disappearance of women from the field of administration: women do not have the education to qualify for the positions; few women desire to leave teaching for administration; women lack the financial incentive to seek the jobs in administration; and women are considered to be inferior because of certain traits and characteristics ascribed to that sex. As Johnson indicates these are largely myths grounded in a value system which is hidden and denied. The situation of women in high salaried jobs is closely tied to this value system operationalized through the economic institutions.

Wheelis suggests a conceptualization which offers the opportunity to study alternate sets of values simultaneously. He explains that there are two kinds of values: institutional values and instrumental values. The former are generally considered as more important because they are derived from myths, mores and status; do not refer to, but transcent the evidence at hand; claim absolute status and immunity to change; and they are relative to the culture which supports them and gives them validity. The final authority of these values is force. On the other hand, instrumental values are derived from tool-using, observation and experimentation. They are temporal, matter-of-fact and secular. They are relative to the state of empirical knowledge and change as that knowledge enlarges. The final

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authority of such values is reason.

Instrumental values are like equality, liberty, fraternity, justice and the deferrment of gratification to the future. Institutional values might be male superiority, white European superiority and the superiority of people with money. The former then, would be used to promote racism, sexism and elitism. One function of social science and education has been to legitimatize the institutional values. Watson explains the effect of this phenomenon on two values. He concludes that "...the critical choice is not so much between one set of scholarly arguments and another: it is among the values and ideals which are to govern society and determine its policies and programs. In a democracy, scientific credentials give no special right to scientists to determine what those values and ideals are to be. The choice belongs to all the citizens."

What makes it difficult for all the citizens to choose is the problem of power. Our economic institutions are based on a contriently interdependent competitive model anchored in the supply and demand paradigm. Using Sol Tax's model, if one lets A stand for groups with power and B represent groups that have no power, the social arrangements can be described with the formula A/B (A has power over B). Under the economic paradigm, when A wins, B loses and when B wins, A loses. A group which is winning strives to keep that position by excluding another group.

Parsons describes the problem of supply and demand indicating that demands for inclusion emanate from the excluded group as well as from certain elements already "in". There is a supply, therefore which operates on both sides of the exclusion line. By supply he means the qualifications of the excluded group for membership, a matter of their cultural and social structures.

The economic institutions provide the mechanism for confining B groups to the kind of participation in the competitive model wherein A can continue to win and B can continue to lose. This is power. Galbraith introduces the idea to economists in his paper delivered at the eighty-fifth meeting of the American Economic Asso. in December, 1972. He states that the most commonplace features of neoclassical and neo-Keynesian economics are the assumptions by which power and political content are removed from the subject. He argues that this error in assumptions destroys the relationship of economics with the real world. The great point of his presentation is in the following quote:

> ...when we make power and therewith politics a part of our system we can no longer escape or disguise the contradictory character of the modern state. The state is the prime object of economic power. It is captured. Yet on all the matters I have mentioned--the restrictions on excessive resource use, organization to offset inadequate resource use, controls, action to correct systemic inequality, protection of the environment, protection of the consumer--remedial action lies with the state. The fox is powerful in the management of the coop. To this management the chickens must look for redress.

Galbraith explains that the recent election was fought over issues

in which the purposes of the planning system (power) diverged from those of the public. The present protest by educators over cuts in educational and social programs is another illustration. A thorough and complete understanding of the economics of the situation is clearly necessary if women administrators are going to make a difference. Galbraith asks whether the emancipation of the state from the control of the planning system is possible? Clearly no one knows.

Women are in the work force in larger numbers than ever. Nearly 31 million or 42 per cent of American women 16 years old and over were working or looking for work in January 1970. However, changes in the occupational distributions are not as great as changes in the numbers of those working. The great majority of us are still working in occupations reserved for us: domestic service, teaching, clerical work, nursing and retail sales. Still, for every 20 women with a job in 1969, another woman was a jobseeker.

According to Bell, the present administration has attempted to minimize the significance of persistently high unemployment by presenting a picture of working women that can be described as lacking any theoretical foundation. She argues that women are not a reserve "army of manpower" but consistently seek work. She shows that women participate in the labor force on a full-time basis rather than on a voluntary part-time basis. She suggests that an intellectual task is to analyze the separate labor markets for men and women to isolate the structural problems which prevent full employment.

Increasingly, the evidence seems to show that the problem of female employment cannot be resolved independent of the economic institutions. As Bell states, ..."they are barriers to the employment of people, whether they are black or white, male or female, under 20 or over 50. These are the proper areas for investigation and for policy, and if attention could be directed there, instead of to defending present policies or offering persuasive but irrelevant analyses of change, we would all be better off."

Although a substantial proportion of the total labor force is due to the continuous influx of married women, a rise in the number of female heads of households may be predicted due to the imbalance resulting from a larger number of women than of men in the prime marriage ages. According to Jackson, the sex ratio has worsened. Census data clearly reveals that females have been excessive in the black population of the United States since at least 1850. In 1850 , the black sex ratio was 99.1 men for each 100 women, rising slightly to 99.6 in 1860, but declining to 96.2 in 1870. In 1880, it was 97.8 and by 1970 there were approximately 91 black males for every 100 black women. Since 1950 the white sex ratio has been declining, 99.1 in that year; 97.3 in 1960 and 95.3 in 1970.

This means that monogamous marriage as we now know it will not be possible for 9 of every 100 black women and for 5 of every 100 white women providing each marries in her own respective races. Additionally, divorce is now becoming easier and more frequent, permitting serial monogamy. Women will be in the work force more in the future because they are the principal breadwinners. The rationale for using the number of employed married men as the key indicator of unemployment will be considerable weakened.

Before women can make a difference in administration, they must first get the jobs. Consequently, women must be more aggressive in the pursuits of their rights to jobs commensurate with their education and experience. When a woman feels that she has been discriminated against she should file an affirmative action suit. Women should support and lobby for laws which guarantee protection of their right to work on an equal basis. Once she gets the job, however, she should make a difference.

We must bring to the job the sensitivity necessary for effective human and personal relations which satisfy the idiographic needs of each person. We must design and implement governance models which give every role incumbent some input into decision-making. We must meld together the three parts of the curriculum: content, methodology and administration so that each reinforces the other and leads toward the goals of the educational program.

We must project empathy and compassion into administration so that students feel a sense of belonging in the massive metropolitan systems of public schools. The same traits which serve to arbitrate matters between warring siblings and parents will serve to negotiate objects between teachers and students, teachers and administrators, and parents and students, parents and teachers, parents and administrators, and even between white parents and black parents. Given a collective circular decision-making model, gang violence can be negotiated as can severe vandalism.

People want to participate in the making of decisions which affect their lives. Even more the future demands a governance model which can deal with the problems of acceleration and transcience. The hierarchical model we now practice is clearly inadequate for handling non-routine problems which require instant communication and non-traditional methods. Events are happening so fast and things are used up so quickly that decision-making through the hierarchy is cumbersome and inefficient. Knowledge accrues at various levels and no longer at the top. Time does not permit a trickling down even when it does. Some way must be devised to include everyone involved and to make fast decisions.

The heart of such a system, it seems, would be dialogue and negotiation. This seems particularly geared toward the traditional female role. We are taught to be good listeners, in preparation for the task of providing husbands and children with wailing walls and sounding boards. We are socialized for the opportunities of dispensing band-aids for everything from sore fingers to hurt feelings. Finding silver linings and blue skies behind dark clouds is child's play for women, and, we can make a difference in administration.

One problem is that we have listened too long to the myths. We have participated too much in the rites and rituals of female inferiority. We have worn the color caste for too long. Some of us believe and have become the principal worshippers at the altar of male superiority. Our problem then is ourselves. Once in an administrative role we strive not to act like women. This has happened often enough. Once having gotten the vote we marched to the polls and voted like our husbands.

One woman appointed to a superintendency in a major metropolitan area selected as her first appointment a man whose experience and education was second to that of a woman who had applied for the same position. Having won her place she did not want to be seen as partial to women. Another commenced her new job by forcing her district superintendents to issue warning notices to principals about their poor performances because she did not want to be viewed as soft and easy-going. Morsink's research

indicates that women secondary school principals more often speak and act as representatives of the group, are more persuasive in argument, emphasize production, maintain cordial relations with superiors, influence them, and strive for higher status more than men secondary school principals. Yet, instead of accentuating their positives many women act like men.

It is difficult to get women to act as a group. Each chapter of NCAWE struggles to recruit and to promote. We do not want to rock the boat. Things are difficult enough for us. We do not want to be seen as "Women Libbers." We want a quiet revolution with no conflict and/or confrontation. We want freedom without responsibility.....the responsibility of acting.

We need a new perspective, a new way of approaching problem-finding. Such a perspective requires new value statements, new overriding goals for our society. We need to ask some questions, such as: What kind of society do we want? What kind of people will we need for such a society? Do we want to continue supporting the institutional values we now promote? Will we continue to use force to uphold them? Julius Nyerere of Tanzania says the purpose of education is to prepare young people to live in and to serve the society and to transmit the knowledge, skills and values and attitudes of that society. In order to build a new society a vision is needed. The polity of Tanzania wants a socialist society based on three principles: equality and respect for human dignity; sharing of the resources produced by the efforts of all and work by everyone and exploitation by none.

This means that the educational system will stress cooperative endeavors as opposed to competitive advancement by individual efforts. It will stress service as opposed to profit, and will counteract the tendency to develop an intellectual arrogance which tempts the educated to despise those who have no special abilities which are academic. Nyerere wants education to develop in the Tanzanian: an inquiring mind, an ability to learn from what others do, and reject or adapt it to his own needs; and a basic confidence in his own position as a free and equal member of the society, who values others and is valued by them for what he does and not for what he obtains.

Can we as administrators push back the frontiers of knowledge and rename this world? Can we probe the economic and social arrangements which define and confine us? Can we develop new approaches to the study of the social sciences in order to correct the difficulties inherent in explanations resting on nonoperating definitions and orienting statements? Faced with Counts' old question, "Dare we change the social order?", the answer is we must.

If we do not bring reason to bear on the questions at hand, bias and emotion will pose their solutions. Law and order will replace justice and due process. Punishment will stand in for rehabilitation and remediation. The institutional values of racism, sexism and elitism will destroy what may be the last opportunity for this country to become the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Such a pursuit takes stamina and fortitude. But, to engage in such a struggle one needs support. If we band together, we can help each other in this effort to change a hostile and oppressive environment into a nurturing and liberating one. The first battles are within us. We must begin with ourselves. And, then, we can make a difference.